



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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Media Bureau Acts on Requests for Waiver of Rules on Integrated Set-Top Boxes

Today the Media Bureau has resolved various set-top box waiver requests, furthering both pro-competition and pro-consumer policies. These issues have been facing cable operators, the consumer electronics industry and the Commission for more than a decade.

The Bureau's actions today implement the statutory requirements to facilitate a competitive market for set-top boxes in a reasonable and consistent manner. Separation of security functions will allow consumers to pick the products they want.

The FCC's Media Bureau today:

Granted an Omnibus Waiver of the integration ban for MVPDs currently all digital or going all digital by February 17, 2009. An all-digital conversion will facilitate the DTV transition, enable expanded service offerings, promote efficient use of the spectrum, deliver broadband services, spur competitive entry, and expand universal service.

Deferred Enforcement of the Integration Ban for Crosslake, Minnesota d/b/a Crosslake Communications. The Media Bureau noted the difficulties that small cable operators may face in complying with the July 1, 2007 deadline for separated security because manufacturers prioritize orders from the largest providers. The Bureau indicated that the Commission would defer enforcement of that deadline for those small cable operators who can demonstrate that they have placed orders for set-top boxes that comply but that their orders will not be fulfilled in time for them to comply with the deadline.

The Bureau denied the broad waiver requests of several cable operators but provided several ways they could amend their requests.

Denied NCTA's (National Cable & Telecommunications Association) request for a waiver of the integration ban for all cable operators. The Bureau finds the arguments NCTA's makes are not adequately novel or changed from assertions that it has made to support previous extension requests to justify further relief and it does not reflect developments in the market.

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